Fall 2021

Beginning Acting
DRAM 1351 - 002 & DRAM 1051 - 020

Name: Kristen Blossom (she/hers)  
Email: kristen.blossom@sfasu.edu  
Phone: x1227  
Office: McKibben 404N  
Office Hours: Mon 2-4p, Tues & Thurs 11a-12p  
Department: School of Theatre

Where: McKibben 322  
When: Monday 1-1:50pm & Wednesday, Friday 1-2:50pm  
Face-to-Face Instructional Method  
3.000 Credits

Catalogue Description: Beginning Acting (DRAM 1351 and DRAM 1051) - Three semester hours. Emphasis on the understanding and exploration of the actor's tools and the application of the actor's basic skills through the creative process.

Course Objective: In this course we will explore the foundations of acting skill using the Demidov Technique (a student of Stanislavsky). We will focus particular attention on the actor's work on themselves. Significant time will be given to work on impulse, action, and listening to a partner, as well as, the basics of script analysis.

Video Etiquette: When creating a video or chatting on Zoom, students are expected to wear proper attire, be courteous to others, and not share information/pictures that are illegal or offensive.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLO’s) Supported in this Course:
1. The student will be able to analyze a script in ways that are necessary to a theatre practitioner or scholar/critic. (All degree plans)
2. The student will demonstrate collaborative and/or leadership competencies appropriate to participate or take a leadership role in an effective theatrical production. (All degree plans)
3. The student will demonstrate an understanding of the component areas of theatrical creation, process, production, performance, and study, and their interrelationships. (All degree plans)
4. The student will demonstrate intermediate to advanced competence in one or more theatre specialization(s). (BA)
5. The student will be able to complete and document a major project as a stage manager, as a designer or technician, or as an actor or director, demonstrating advanced competence in the student’s specialty. (BFA)
6. The student will be able to present an effective presentation appropriate to the student's specialization. (BFA)

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO’s) for this course (supported PLO’s):
Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:
1. Understand vocabulary of the theatre (PLO’s 3, 4, & 5)
2. Create a performance and analyze a text (PLO 1)
3. Utilize and comprehend modern acting theory (PLO’s 2, 3, 4, & 5)
4. Effectively collaborate on a performance project with a scene partner(s) and a director (PLO’s 2, 3, 4, & 5)
5. Describe the principles of an actor’s process (PLO’s 3, 4, 5, & 6)

Text and Materials (Suggested)
Acting is Believing 12th Edition

Course Requirements
You must check D2L every day and have a way to access it during class.
50% Attendance, Participation, Discussion & Assignments  
25% Midterm  
25% Final

Attendance, Participation, Discussion & Assignments 50%
The expectation in this class is that you are fully engaged as an artist for each class session. You must be present and ready to work at the beginning of each class. You are expected to be mentally, emotionally, and physically prepared. You will be asked to engage as a student, artist, and collaborator every day. Online discussion will be monitored by the instructor through D2L.

Theatre is an intrinsically collaborative art, and the practical application side of your training occurs largely in the classroom. Therefore, your absence from class impacts not only your learning, but also the learning of the other students. You should not miss class.

NOTE: You should expect to commit significant out of class time to preparation and rehearsal. You must treat this out of class work as a serious commitment. If I receive more than two complaints about any student’s presence, preparation, or participation in outside rehearsals, that student will be asked to withdraw from the class.

A Note on Memorization: Memorization is a base level expectation for actors. You must memorize early and be ready to work off-book. If you struggle with memorization please let me know, and I will give you tools to help.

Midterm 25% - Confidence, Emotion & Imagination
Project: The Art of Masks

Final 25% - Presence, Power & Authenticity
Final Scene Performance – You will audition for the Beginning Directing class and perform in one of the scenes directed by those students. You will turn in a journal of your rehearsal experience that includes an analysis of your scene.

Grading Policy
A – Student shows a heightened level of attention, commitment, and effort.
B – Student shows an acceptable level of attention, commitment, and effort.
C – Student is present and not disruptive or obviously disengaged.
D – Student is present and mildly disruptive or disengaged.
F – Student is present and significantly disruptive or disengaged.
0 – Student is not present or asked to leave class.

Late Work: All assignments should be handed in in class by the beginning of class. Any assignment will be marked off 10% for each day it is late.

The Varying Nature of Assignments: There will be various assignments and projects periodically throughout the semester based on the progression of the class. Not every assignment is listed on this syllabus.

Course Calendar (tentative)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>August &amp; September</th>
<th>Course Intro, Building Confidence, Exploring Emotion, Reconnecting with Imagination</th>
<th>Lectures, Exercises, Assignments &amp; Discussions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October &amp; November</td>
<td>Being in the Present, Speaking with Power and Authenticity</td>
<td>Lectures, Exercises, Assignments &amp; Discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Midterm Mask Project:</strong> Friday, October 15th</td>
<td><strong>Thanksgiving Break:</strong> Nov 22nd-26th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Final Scenes:</strong> Finals Week December 6-10th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Classroom Policies
1 NO CELL PHONES for any reason.
2 Always come to class with a writing utensil and paper.
3 Disorderly conduct or talking inappropriately in class is not permitted.
All Acting, Movement, and Theatre Speech classes at SFA require the wearing of black movement clothing. This is a common practice in many Theatre training programs. It is intended to create a sense of neutrality across the performers, make it easier to step in and out of character, and help the performance classroom feel like a space where art is made. Your clothing should be solid black and not include designs, images or words. Small brand logos are acceptable. Your clothes should effectively cover your body through a range of movement possibilities. Further, no hats may be worn. If you must cover your hair, skullcaps are acceptable. If you are not wearing class appropriate clothing, you will be asked to leave, and receive an absence for the day, as well as, a zero engagement score for the day.

This class requires significant physical interaction between students. Please come to class clean, and with nails trimmed.

Jewelry should be removed before class. This includes necklaces, long, dangling earrings, watches, body piercings and large rings. This prevents potentially dangerous snags on your own body or other’s bodies.

Soft soled movement or athletic type shoes shall be worn for class. On occasion, we will work with bare feet. I would encourage black shoes, but as quality movement shoes are expensive any color is acceptable.

Bring a no-spill water bottle to class. Only water is allowed. Fill it before class; you can't leave class to fill it. No food in class (this includes gum and candy).

Hair should be pulled out of the face.

Assist in keeping the space clean, organized and ready for the next class.

Attendance Policy
In keeping with the School of Theatre policy (see the school Handbook), the following applies to this course:

"…regular and punctual attendance is expected for all classes, laboratories and other activities for which a student is registered or assigned.

"I. It is University policy to excuse students from class attendance for certain reasons related to health, family emergencies…and other situations of similar importance.

"Excused absences from Theatre classes will only be granted upon presentation of written documentation upon the first day of the student’s return from the teacher; sponsor or physician involved. In the case of absences caused by University-sponsored events, inclusion in the University’s public listing of such absences will constitute an official excuse. It is the student’s responsibility to inform the instructor that he/she has scheduled the planned official absence.

"II. A total of…7 excused and/or unexcused absences in Tuesday-Thursday classes will result in the student receiving a failing grade. Excessive unexcused absences will affect your grade.

"III. The student will be allowed a maximum of…two unexcused absences in Tuesday-Thursday classes. [More than two unexcused absences will result in a lower grade (1.5 points out of 100 for each absence) in this course.]

"IV. In the case of missed classes, the student will be held responsible for the successful completion of assigned work and/or projects."

Academic Integrity (4.1)
Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the
falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-academic-dishonesty-4.1.pdf

Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (5.5)
Last updated by the SFA Core Curriculum Committee April 2021
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

Students with Disabilities
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

Mental Health and Wellness
SFA values students' mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. SFA provides a variety of resources to support students' mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

On-campus Resources:  
SFA Counseling Services  
www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices
Rusk Building, 3rd Floor  
936.468.2401

SFA Human Services Counseling Clinic  
www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp
Human Services, Room 202  
936.468.1041

Crisis Resources:  
Burke 24-hour crisis line: 1.800.392.8343  
Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.TALK (8255)
Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741

Diversity and Inclusion
This class engages material covering a diverse range of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, gender, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, and disability. While I encourage you to formulate and express your thoughts and opinions throughout the semester, discriminatory remarks will not be tolerated and may constitute disruptive behavior under the student code of conduct.